

**Editorial Comment****New joint initiative to solve dispute**

**T**he stage has been set for a unified approach to tackle the unfounded Guatemalan claim to Belize. The problem has bedeviled Belize from its early history and has defied all efforts aimed at a solution so far. When the United Democratic Party formed the opposition, it had repeatedly requested of the then governing Peoples United Party a say, or at least a role to play in the search for a solution to this vexing problem. Limited consultation was offered and was taken up for a time. However, never have both the incumbent and opposition parties come together in a formal unified body like the Special Select Committee of the House of Representatives announced on June 27th by Prime Minister Mr. Manuel Esquivel.

In introducing a motion for the establishment of the committee, the Prime Minister said that it was being established in the national interest to "provide for consultation and exchange of information on negotiations and other processes in the search for a solution of the issues arising from the Guatemalan claim to Belize."

The committee which is now known as the House Advisory Committee on the Guatemalan Issue has as its members, the Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Manuel Esquivel - Chairman, The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs Mr. Curl Thompson - Deputy Chairman, the Attorney General and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Dean Barrow, the Minister of Labour and Social Services Mr. Philip Goldson, the Leader of the Opposition Mr. Florencio Marin and the Dangriga representative Mr. Simeon Sampson. The establishment of the committee and its makeup was discussed and agreed on by the Leader of Government and the Leader of the Opposition.

The committee has as its terms of reference:

1. The committee shall meet when convened by its Chairman who shall be the Prime Minister, or in his absence the Deputy Prime Minister. The committee shall in any case meet not less than once quarterly to review information and reports which may be available on the subject of the Guatemalan issue and to make such inquiries or render such advice or proposals on the subject as it may consider appropriate.

2. The committee may from time to time lay on the table such information, proposal or report as it may consider appropriate. The committee may at any time request the Speaker to convene a committee of the entire House to discuss in

confidence or otherwise, any information, report or proposal.

3. The Speaker shall refer to the committee for examination, any motion, proposal, question, petition or other matter on the Guatemalan issue which may come before the House.

We see the establishment of the House Advisory Committee on the Guatemalan Issue as a dramatic and historic development in Belize's search for a solution to a problem that in the view of most Belizeans has dragged on for much too long. The inflexibility of our neighbour to the west and south has been the major stumbling block to the Guatemala conundrum. That is the view of most Belizeans. But we must add to that the fact that Belizeans, through their political leaders, have never been able to achieve unification in the form of a concerted approach to the ways of settling the problem. The public outcry and indignation at the Webster Proposals and more recently the Heads of Agreement, in our opinion, was evidence of that lack of cooperation and shared knowledge between the government and opposition.

The House Advisory Committee will by no means, except by accident, create unification between the government and opposition as to how the issues should be determined and what concessions Belize would be willing to consider to assure such settlement. However it should lead to an opportunity for dialogue and a possible convergence of views, through shared knowledge and information, as to how the issues arising from the Guatemalan claim can be approached. Couple this with the existence in Guatemala of a democratically elected government and we may just have the beginning of a solution.



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# The NEW BELIZE

Vol. XVI No. 6

June, 1986

## Cover Story

**T**he Belize Tourist Bureau recently received a grant from the United States Agency for International Development to continue its work of promoting tourism development in Belize.

Our Cover Story takes an in-depth look at the tourism industry. It is based in part on two recent studies carried out by foreign consultants who were contracted to analyse tourism's potential for expansion and recommend ways of undertaking that expansion.

Both studies agree that Belize has magnificent natural attractions



## Sports Review



**T**he Review Team requested by government to look at Belize's Public Service has presented its anxiously awaited report. The report will be examined by Cabinet and shared with public officers. In the meantime, though the Permanent Secretary to the Cabinet Mr. Carlos Perdomo reports in Viewpoint that planned change in any organisation is a delicate, challenging task and must seek to improve that organisation's "health."

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**H**ave you been to Orange Walk Town lately? Its many present attractions make it a place for action. It has many historical monuments. Its natural scenery is superb. One can certainly have a wonderful time in Belize's most economically vibrant town. Philip Castillo reports on Orange Walk Town in Travelogue.

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**T**hough not victorious in its bid for the title of Concacaf's Champion of Champions, the performance of Belize's national football Champs Verdes was commendable. Verdes won their first game against Bermuda's Pembroke Hamilton here in Belize but lost by a wider margin in their rematch in Bermuda.

Philip Castillo did a Sports Review on Belize's first opportunity to make a name on the international football scene.

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and that tourism can provide a great boost to this country's development. Government has already implemented some of their recommendations and is looking more carefully at the others to ensure the preservation of one of the tenets of its tourism policy: Belizeans as far as possible must be facilitated to remain and increase their presence in the industry through ownership of hotels, guest houses, tour companies and other tourist facilities.

Ag. Chief Information Officer Manolo Romero reports on government's new thrust for tourism development.

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**A**s a follow-up to our Viewpoint last month, Manolo Romero interviewed PRIDE - Belize Director Dr. Arturo Lizano. In his informative interview, Dr. Lizano explains how PRIDE is working through the school system to increase drug awareness and promote drug education.

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**T**he Principal of the Belize Technical College is our Personality of the Month. Mr. Owen Morrison has long had an association with Technical and he has no plans to move elsewhere. Information Officer Philip Castillo found out that Mr. Morrison had to struggle to overcome his early deprivations and make somebody of himself. He can always be an example to the many students under his tutelage.

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